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Woodwind

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AN ARTS PAPER

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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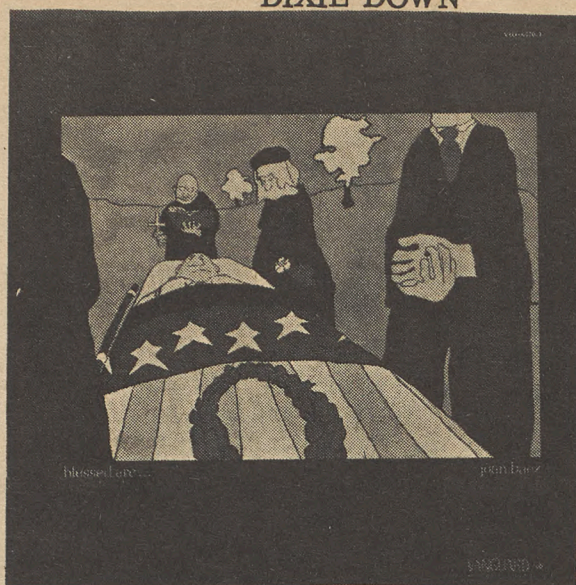


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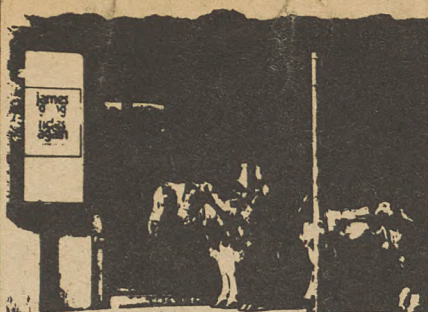
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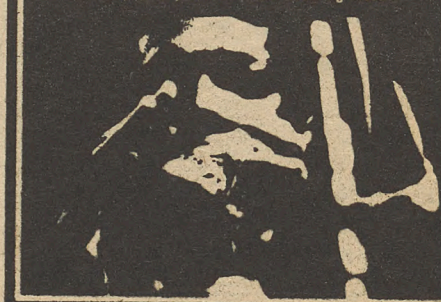
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NOVEMBER 11, 1971

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STAFF:

Karen Alenier, Dede Baldwin, Ned Chaillet, Constance Chancellor, Mary Chancellor, Tina Dassoulas, Dennis, Tim Healey, Tom Horn, Patty Pearson, Mark Power, John Reap, Bruce Rosenstein, Mike Schreiber, Mike Snyder, Larry Reidman, Washington Reviewing Society, Judy Willis, and Debbie Vaughn.

FOR POETS:

This issue of Woodwind features Karen Alenier and Larry Riedman. See Poetry Section.

Twenty-four year old Karen Alenier was born in Cheverly, Maryland, and attended the University of Maryland where she received a Bachelor's Degree in French. Having worked as a computer programmer for two years she has returned to the University of Maryland as a graduate student in the field of Library and Information Science.

Larry Riedman, age twenty-two, attended undergraduate school at Lebanon Valley College for a Bachelor of Art's Degree in English. Born and raised in Central Pennsylvania, he has been here in Washington, D. C. since January, working as a conscientious objector at the George Washington University Hospital.

Both Alenier and Riedman can be experienced first hand, along with Paul Jones, Deirdra Baldwin, and Dan Washburn, at a reading to be held Sunday, November 14, at 7:30 P. M., The Potter's House, 17th & Columbia, N. W.

BOOK REVIEWS NEEDED

We've got the books, if you've got the time. We need reviewers in all areas, but especially people who are into gay lib, women's lib, leftist politics, and fine arts. Call Judy Willis at 979-5179 or call Woodwind.

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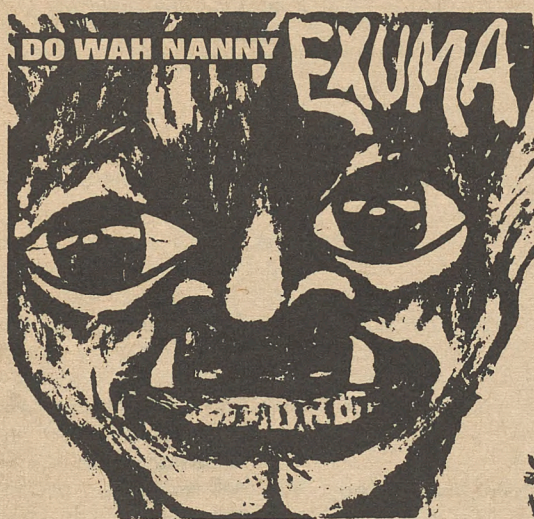
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Throw
my shoulders & arms
back
quick preparations
for the jump
I've pushed off
Is falling what I want?
actually
I fear the rush
of falling...

And yet
I eased
into this jump
telling myself
"How
great
the space..."
knowing
that I have dreamed
merely
of falling down
the staircase
of a childhood
home
enough
to wake myself up
my breath and blood swirling...

No,
floating
is really
what I had
in mind
floating, I said
not
flying
(the thought of
falling
could only
keep me
all my life
from defining myself)

At the end
I can only admit
unprofoundly
I want
control
over
time
and
not especially
space.

Klee Danse

Clay
came to
a party
last night
in the form
of a jug
jig, jig.
Paul,
you came, too.
Remember,
I was the girl
with a jug
jig, jig.
The atmosphere
was blue
and the jug
was brown.
Hmm...
I wonder what
Wallace Stevens
would have heard
had he
halooed
in the jug
as I did
jig, jig.

Digger's Explanation

In my hand
the handle of a shovel
my right foot on the blade top
pushing unyielding soil.
I'm digging this trench
for the sake of order;
I'm digging this hole
for the sake of death.
And though it's not my job
to lower the dead into their graves,
I'm responsible
as the toll keeper
for opening the way.
Foot down,
blade in,
blade full,
more soil up there,
a little less here.
The child's game put-and-take
applies to my work
as the process of life and death.

A Seasons's Greeting

In middle earth...
or Iowa
whichever
satisfies
your mind
LET THERE BE
peace
however boring
So that...
the rhinoceri
can mangle
their sustenance
as they will
While...
the giraffe
awaits
the delicacy
of spring green.

KAREN ALENIER

Paul Klee: "The Creator"

If God
were
violet
he would
be
dancing
cicada-winged
and
shoeless
in the clean
mist
of dawn
and
if I
were
dedicated
to violet
as the painter
to paint
It would be
I
who would
tickle
his feet
with my brush.

Connoisseur: Quel bec ca!

Maladroit mastications
tsk!
the libretto of life
mangled
into
stubby
rhinoceros
teeth.
I
the giraffe belvedere
sniff
and
curl
dexterous
lips
around the opening
leaf
of green.

Ballet in Wooden Clogs

Walking
and wanting
to wait...
Walking
but waiting
for alien
echoes
through committatus
tapping
produced
by rote...
Stepping...
Stepping...
with intense
latin
pride
but
clicking out
adolescent
cocks.

Preparing to go to the beauty shop

Hey!
Come on
with your philosophy
folded
under your arm
like
yesterday's
newspaper.
If today's
words
aren't available,
I might need
yours
but it
doesn't look like
rain.

Poetry

"The Plains Tribes' Dead"

The Plains Tribes' dead are shelved on towers:
Wooden, bruised, undressed, low knuckles on
hills breasting even flatland winds;
Untethered rafts atop sinews of heat struck
from ungiving rock.

He floats already on their shoulders,
bending to the slope as grass to dawn-light:
Keening weight, placed at last by tilting arms
to rest amid the tribe,
His tribe descending then as hide bindings
seep low groans across the open land.

Birds too will descend, or flesh open,
dropping moist upon the wood, settling
through the drying wood.
Jutted in the working sun of several years,
open too he is to winds fitful on the
fists of gathered land, restive,
Pressing lyric through feathers of bright bone.

"From This Empty, Umbral Street"

From this empty, umbral street
The jewelwork of our feet
Rattles through each hungry, glass-deep alley.
Slow breakers climb ashore:
So our reflections pitch in shopfronts.
Celibate as sand and wave,
We stand. I reach, before you move.

Saints and seers have no women,
Move like cats, loose as fog:
Thoughtless Riplers-of-the-Pool
retrieve their pebbles late, too late,
sift through years, to age, like ashes.
Satisfied to die like smoke-rings,
Past entrapment, past escape,
They rise to take another shape.

I am a pretentious, shapeless poet.
("The shapes a bright container can contain.")
In love, in loss: the same.
In full writ or empty page: the same
captive to your febrile wisdom,
Though unfettered as a day-storm.
Be the sea: I stand low at the shore,
Pleased to watch you move, not asking more.

"Select Bosoms, Denatured"

I knew a woman, lovely as a bone;
So for her bosom, sadly ungrown
Though--by example of her hindparts--
Recompense leads among all Nature's arts:
Walking, I cautiously stayed in her lee;
Her ass had the mass of a wallowing sea
("Fish-swallowing," I soberly thought,
"Dear God, the poor cod lost in all that.")
Yet I met her opposite,
A perfect model for the bird
(You've heard perhaps of the Pendulous Tit,
Named for its nest like a hanging gourd;)
A woman so possessed of pap
That when she sits her tits rest on her lap;
A lady made so well for mothering
Surely her babe would die for smothering,
And suck no more. So to the Sycamore:
Buttonwood among its less-heard names,
Its buttons smooth and shapely as a dame's
Should be. But though a tree be in-between,
And Nature's Mean, the speculation shortly grows obscene.
So enough description of the real!
Off with simple observation!
Vast prescription--the Ideal--
These have been the poet's station.
Then to end it: my intended is best-blended,
Has it all, is great and small: a bosom like a cannonball!
A single giant tit, that which every poet lives to find:
His motherwit! It's what? Pleasing only to the mind?

"Catch-22, First Return"

Years past it was Yossarian, I had to be Yossarian.
Mr. Heller, thanks for such a one but Orr fits better now:
I lately opt clear-headed straightway for survival,
Not dropping rubber-raftered, trailing fishlines in the Adriatic,
Only learning my own ways and nerves and easy means.
It won't come to one last chance for all but each:
Already here for me, I'm playing mine--I cross the room,
I whisper through my smile, not insistant, just think that it's time
You fly with me, Yossarian, fly with me.

LARRY RIEDMAN

"The Resuscitation Team
Leaves The Hospital Cafeteria"

Jolting up from lunch,
Each finds another's eyes for
surety--they've heard the same.
Bolting for the hall,
They flow around the tables;
Last, the freckled girl's stethoscope
bobs through the flying door.
Steam from left vegetables and chowder
rises to the ceiling.
A fork has been dropped by the thick-armed
one--he'll break a man's ribs to pound
his heart alive.
The page-box calls again.

For all her sure purpose,
And her busy friction of udder-white
hose through the room,
A nurse can only wait:
Every nightstand has a clock
To time the starving of the brain.
This drives ahead.

More I never learn,
Though a soul, or simple heat, must
sometimes leave the body, yearning
at the high ceiling, turning cool.
I swear: in those minutes I can sense
this great, blocky building pressed
from its roots, its dour, customary rest.

"I Saw, Wanted, Touched Her Skin"

I saw, wanted, touched her skin;
I later learned of nakedness and shame,
And made for her, in face of them,
A dress, though careful that it showed
Each settlement and surge her body
Reached beneath the even cloth.

Light Girds the Beamwork Open Overhead

Light girds the beamwork open overhead,
Simply present as in movie bedrooms
After lamps are reached and damped.
Above as well I drive an ancient, customary wheel,
Palms wet circles to her skin, my rhythm a soft closure;
Spending then, I end across her ribs,
A breathless cobweb heavy as those beams come down.
She thinks, "A close is made," has never known it so black,
and feels quite alone.
She anchors in warm light, folds of shadow, remembered
ephemeral stems of rain.
I sense each nerve of night tense span-by-spark-by-span
At her every quiet breath, though she believe me a great stone.

Past the building auto-sound of coming morning,
Past the moisture wrapped deep in her joints,
Again she thinks, "An end is made."
She works to breathe and waits;
And I wait, knowing that we call the passage mine.
Yet this much-sought arrival has--for me--no grace:
I'd not be so helpless near another face.
Uncertain that she knows her own,
And feeling strength return along my arms,
I lift myself, deliver us apart.

"BETTER BE PICKING, MAN, YOU COME TO PLAY IN MY BAND."
Bill Holland

Duane Allman, 24, Rock Band Leader

MACON, Ga. (UPI) — Guitarist Duane Allman, leader of the Allman Brothers rock band and one-time accompanist for Aretha Franklin, died last night after his motorcycle collided with a truck.

The driver of the truck, Charles Wertz, told police he had just finished making a turn when "I saw a motorcycle about 20 feet behind my truck. I slowed and heard a crash."

Allman, 24, born in Nashville, Tenn., had traveled to Florida and the West Coast before settling the past three years in this central Georgia city.

His death came as the band prepared to leave on a New England tour, followed by a performance in New York City's Carnegie Hall.

Washington Star - 10/30/71

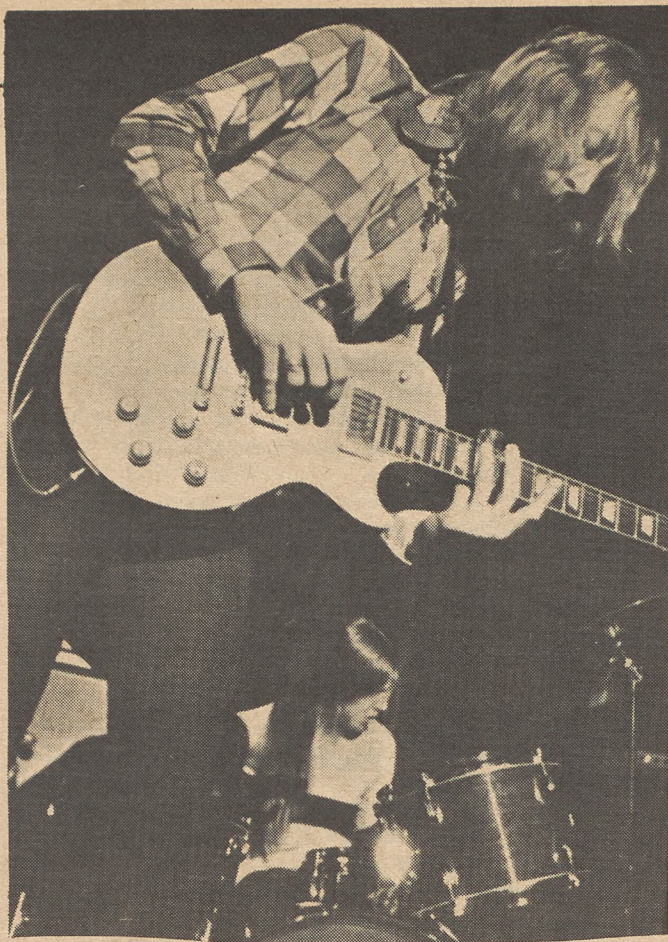
I'm not trying to tie his death to his music. Far from it. I am just trying in his music as it lived for those who had just a half-an-ear to listen. That's all he needed to draw you in,

Duane Allman's wire service obituary, three inches long, appeared in the dailies, Saturday, October 30th. All things considered, I was not only saddened to see it, but surprised the story was as long as it was.

I supposed, in a Billboardian sense, he was beginning to be a rock "star," but even though the Allman Brothers Band's latest album finally got the point across that this was a truly dynamite band (please--I never use that word casually), he was primarily a consummate musician. That's why I really felt his loss, as if I had known not only his music, but the man himself.

I had felt, from the first time I saw and heard him in live concert, that there was an intangible sense of danger in his music, beyond the majestic power of his band. His lines gave me a shivering feeling in clear terms: this is what it's like, living on the edge. The rough, bawdy and sometimes exquisite edge of life.

I'm not trying to tie his death to his music. Far from it. I am just trying in his music as it lived for those who had just a half-an-ear to listen. That's all he needed to draw you in,



DUANE ALLMAN

November 20, 1946

October 29, 1971

A Brother



His music told the old tales of engaging it, warring with it with the few talents humans have, and finding its weak spot--the absurd, noble, human heart.

"Don't dig nothing that brings you down...just dig yourself for the beautiful things you are, man...."

His tales were spellbinding, too, well spun-out, full of tension and...they reminded of the times as children we listened to, you know, the kind of man who'd been around and had a way with him. He could be from the sea, by the river bank. The grizzly auto mechanic. The old boho artist. Leadbelly. Lightnin' Hopkins. That sort of man. And, yes, Melville, Conrad, Crane, Faulkner.

He would have laughed at his buddies, being compared to Faulkner (as no doubt the reverse would have been true). But imagine, if the times had been reversed....

And he could be gentle, too, in the way Southerners who confront the darkness have always been.

He found his stand early. Interviews point out he was playing at 13. He worked on it, you could hear that, day by day, until he could live by it.

It is something, still, to be brave.

Duane Allman was a powerful guitarist. He was one of the best contemporary musicians in the world.

There are few musical bars that he leaves behind that did not say something, something for the street and the home. He said, over and over: There is music: I have mine to play, and it's good, and I'm not afraid.

His music was rock solid, stone good...these awkward words for fundamental togetherness. His slide guitar work was fierce. All of it had an unblinking glare, with a grin. It never had to brag. And it could be quiet, and fun, and gentle, too.

His music came out of the blues. He never used the blues to portray some wailing neurosis; he never made an obscenity of the music by memorizing old '78's and repeating them note by note; and his was never some phantasmagoric addendum to the form. No, it seemed to be honest, of himself. An honest warrior's song, something quite rare these days.

His musical phrases told of meeting that old wall a long time ago, and successful for a time--human method of defiance. And he revealed in it.

"It was fun, man, it never stopped being fun!"

I listen to his music and it makes me think of something quite old-fashioned and even passé. His guitar sang like a tempered, singing sword, to defy that which which often cowers us. That. "That" was oppression in all its forms, fears, those things music and poetry lay waste to.

He met it, just as we should do, everyday.

SYKESVILLE

7

CLAUDE JONES - SYKESVILLE

by Bruce Rosenstein

Johnny Cash has played at Folsom Prison. B.B. King has played at the Cook County Jail. For five bucks you can hear about it. You can even see Johnny do it on the teevee.

But on October 28, the lives of a number of mental patients at the Springfield State Mental Hospital were brightened considerably by the beautiful rock and roll of Claude Jones. There was no fanfare, or even publicity about the gig outside of the hospital, the band played for free, there will be no record, there were no film crews or even photographers there; just a band and a lot of people sorely deserving a good time.

Springfield State Hospital is located in Sykesville, Md.; it was the inspiration for the infamous song on the group's mini-album. Claude Jones, through the efforts of John Guernsey, the song's author, and manager Mike Oberman, contacted the hospital, offering their services, thus leading to Claude Jones playing in the hospital's auditorium for a "Halloween Dance" for the patients.

It turned out to be quite a night.

The hospital is about an hour's drive from Washington, set among beautiful rolling hills and wide open spaces. Down the road before you reach the hospital there is a sign saying "Welcome to Sykesville-Business District" and at a glance it doesn't appear to be much. The hospital itself is farther down the road, a winding collection of brick buildings on a large stretch of land. Everyone arrived separately and found their way up to the building housing the dance. The auditorium is on the second floor, the dining room is on the first floor and it's dinner time. We were now getting our first look at the patients, and it was none too encouraging. This building was set among the women's dormitories, and a stream of older ladies passed by us, wandering around, with no particular place to go. Some stopped to talk to the hippies, as the band's equipment was being unloaded from the truck and lugged upstairs. Some stopped to ask for cigarettes, which seemed to be an excessively popular commodity among the ladies. Others stared and moved on. One lady walked up to a couple of other women and sang "Let Me Call You Sweetheart." It got quite depressing.

The auditorium itself looked more like a high school gymnasium, except the ceilings were too low. It was long enough, though, with rows of aluminum folding chairs tied together lining the entire room. The bulk of the floor space was left open for dancing. The walls were painted a kind of pale green, the windows were screened in. It could have been the scene of another high school dance, but this was to be no ordinary gig.

While the equipment was being set up upstairs, and the 7:00 PM starting time neared, we sat on the steps outside, and awaited the arrival of the patients. One of the patients, a lady of about 40, told us about the hospital; who lived there, what was in each building, when the men would be coming. She was dressed in a blue party dress from the 50's, with high heels and a black mask over her eyes. She walked away, and shortly a schoolbus pulled up in front of the building, and the first group of male patients were being brought to the dance. If we were depressed by what we had seen up to now, the situation hardly improved. All the ages of men got off the bus, some dressed in costumes, others just in shabby ill-fitting clothes. There were some younger men, but most of them were over 30. You couldn't tell some of them were mental patients by looking at them, but some were extreme cases. Some had women's dresses on, with beads and mops on their heads, others came in more accurate drag. A patient looked at several members of the band on the steps and laughed, "Look at their costumes!" A younger man with a straw cowboy hat sat down among us inquiring as to who was the 'big boss' and was quite disappointed when everyone told him there was no leader. He seemed almost too cagey and sharp to be here. He informed us that there was no use in trying something fancy tonight; "There ain't no talent scouts here." How true. Another two or three buses pulled up and unloaded in front of us and the anticipation grew. It's gonna be a strange one folks.

Shortly before seven we went upstairs and the room was filled. There were a few supervisors, about six or seven student nurses, but the overwhelming number of people were patients. A lady got onstage, spoke a few introductory words, told the dancers (who had number cards tied around their necks) to form a large circle and move clockwise for the dance contest. And then she turned the evening over to "Claude Jones and his band." The music starts as they go into a cooking Mexican sounding jam, as they bring a little of Tijuana to Sykesville. Things start off a little slow at first but gradually the band and dancers both get going. The band played faster and more involved, and everyone onstage and off loosens up and relaxes. The dancers move around freely to the soaring guitar riffs of Frannie and Happy, who is now happily bouncing around on stage. Guernsey behind electric piano is dressed for the occasion, resplendent in white painted face, his lips painted bright red, a large black top hat, and a white carnation for the lapel of his black sportcoat. Joe Triplet appears on stage with his teeshirt proclaiming "Sherm Cooper's Cycloranch Trenton N.J. Racing Team."

The first number ended, the band was warmed up and the people started to dig the music and danced. Frannie steps to the mike and reminds them that "if you want to dance, don't be afraid, just get up and dance by yourself, or with another guy or girl." More people get up off their chairs and join the dancers and some members of the Claude Jones contingent get up to dance with the patients. The band launched into "You Can All Join In." A number of people still wandered around, paying little attention to the music or the musicians, others stood near to the stage and started getting into the music. Most of the dancers broke off into pairs or by themselves, and the circle got smaller. The song is over and the lady moves to the stage once more, and hands Frannie, who has become the emcee for the evening, a slip of paper with the numbers of the dance contest winners which Frannie dutifully announces.

Some of the dancers paid attention to see if their numbers were called, others could have cared less and wandered around in their own little worlds. An older man with a stubby beard, tall and gawky, wearing a woman's dress, spent the entire evening around in no set direction, laughing out loud, howling, slapping other patients on the back, obviously to the music. There were people of all ages and afflictions present, some of them better off than others, none of them in very good shape. A man of about 22, with a full, red face, wearing a plaid shirt and baggy green pants, came up to three of us separately, saying, "They cut off all of my hair when I came here. I used to have beautiful hair down to here. Do you think it'll grow back soon?" He said he used to play the guitar and was in a band; he was put in the hospital for doing too much speed. He had a habit of putting of putting his fingers to his head and spreading his hands out, pointing around the auditorium. He was different from many of the others in that he knew that he had a problem and was fairly aware of his situation. Maybe those who think there is something cool about "speeding your brains out" should talk to this man who has done just that.

The band plays "Open the Door Richard" and "Lodi" and "Hundred People" and it is now clear that the people are having more fun than they thought possible.

Frannie explains to the crowd that if they want to thank anyone for tonight, they should thank the man behind the organ, John Guernsey, and then announced a song called "Sykesville"; and the student nurses start cheering. During the song they sing along with the band, "Let the cold wind blow, let the cold wind blow, / when you ain't got nothing, you ain't got nothing at all." I don't think many of the patients were aware of what the song was saying, but I don't think it mattered. They enjoyed it.

During "Six Days On the Road" and older patient, a small, pudgy middle aged man with a green jacket and a little black hat sitting on his head, steps near the stage and asks Joe something. Pretty soon he's right up there in front of the mike, playing kazoo along with the band. Twice Joe eased away for a couple of instrumental breaks and the man blew his kazoo, and to our somewhat startled ears, it sounded pretty good. The song came grinding to a halt and the man left the stage to some extra applause and the waiting handshakes and friendly slaps of his friends. The band resumed rocking with "Honky Tonk Women" and "Long Tall Sally." It was getting near nine, and just about everyone knew it would have to end soon. The band had been rocking steadily since seven without a break and they were scheduled to play only until nine. Then, the familiar light bouncing piano came in, Joe's moaning harmonica in the background, and they were into "A Very Cellular Song," their perfect rock and roll choir voices sing, "And We bid You Goodnight," and then everyone claps along as the song continues and I'm thinking to myself, "If they've been dancing and enjoying themselves this much up to now, wait until they hear 'King of Slang.'" The choir continues and the song eases to a smooth end... "And the pure light within you guide you all the way on." Guernsey bounces up from the piano to the organ, Reggie starts hitting out a beat, but a man climbs on stage and steps to the mike calling for Claude Jones himself and Mike Oberman to come to the stage. He then presented him with a beautiful little plaque for volunteer service, made out to the "Claude Jones Rock and Roll Band." A truer description is not possible.

The second the man stops talking they are into "King of Slang" and they are now dancing frantically to the amazingly bouncy organ as I knew they would. And then it's all over. Some people file out, a number of them head for the stage to shake hands with and talk to the band. The feeling of depression that we felt before the dance had gone away while the band was playing and everyone was having a good time. These people need entertainment like this if their health is ever to improve and to show them that someone cares. Everyone was warm and friendly to everyone else, the supervisors and patients inviting the band back, and I am sure they will be back. Although we felt better than before, we suddenly realized that we would go home to our family and friends and pursue our lives as before, but the lives they were going back to would be quite a bit bleaker. The music was over, but only temporarily. Claude Jones will be back, and I hope that others will be too. A lot of spiritual barriers were torn down on October 28, and everyone came away infinitely better for the experience.

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Brad Blanton, Ph.D., is a gestalt therapist and president of the Gestalt Institute of Washington. He is on the board of directors of Quest and has run numerous groups for us over the past two years. He is an extremely creative and unpredictable group leader.

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PERFORMANCE PERSPECTIVES

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Openings: The Trial of the Catonsville Nine at the Center Stage, Baltimore
Macbeth at Stage One
Two Eyes, Two Ears, a new Czech play at the Open Stage
The Country Girl at the Eisenhower Theatre
Man of La Mancha, with Allan Jones at the National

Note: The Otrabanda Company, which played to standing room audiences in Washington this summer at the Stage Studio, has begun weekly performances of their laboratory production of The Kaaka-Makaakoo at Theatre Project, 45 West Preston, Baltimore, every Wednesday at 8:30 PM. Also opening at Theatre Project is William Russo's "Rock Opera" Aesop's Fables Sundays at 7 and 9 and Mondays at 8. Call 539-3090 in Baltimore for further information. Reviews soon.

Next Issue: A run-down on student discount policies at local theatres.

KENNEDY CENTER

Regarding the lack of information about the Kennedy Center in this publication; Woodwind is preparing a long article on the Center and is interested in your opinions about the Center. If you have had any experiences, good or bad, with the Center that you would like to share, drop a note describing them to Ned Chaillet - c/o Woodwind. The article promised for this issue on the San Francisco Mime Troupe and the Goodweather Puppeteers will appear with the article on the Kennedy Center.

CEREMONIES IN DARK OLD MEN - By LONNE ELDER III
at the Back Alley Theatre

THE BACK ALLEY THEATRE HAS done Washington a favor by giving us this chance to see Ceremonies in Dark Old Men. It is the story of a family in Harlem, Russel Parker, his sons Theopolis and Bobby, and his daughter Adele. Adele has been supporting the three men since her mother's death, which she blames on her father. As the play opens she is threatening to throw the three men out unless they get jobs. Theopolis, who has actively dedicated himself to a refusal to work for the white man, and who tries to pass as an artist with his family, announces that he will save them with the corn whiskey he's been brewing in the back room. He introduces his father to Blue Haven, a gangster who is working to drive "Mr. You-Know-Who" out of Harlem by starting his own numbers game, bootleg whiskey operation, and organizing "raids" on white-owned businesses. Russel's defunct barber shop becomes a center for the numbers and bootleg operations, selling dartboards decorated with particularly unpopular whites on the side.

The disintegration of the family that follows is the crux of the play. Theo assumes the nagging role of Adele as he finds that he is doing all the work. Russel starts dipping into the till to finance the affair with a young whore who is working for one of Blue Haven's rivals. Adele is going out every night, running with what used to be called a bad crowd. Bobby has become one of the night-raiders for Blue.

The play is too good to reveal any more of the plot. But the success of the play is not in its plot but in its characters. Blue Haven is a bitter fusion of sex and violence, and you can't really say that he's just exploiting the rising tide of black nationalism for his own profit; he does exploit it, but he is truly a part of it, fighting with the tools at his command. Bobby is a study in the inarticulate, spending his time trying to think of something to say to his brother and coming up empty; he can communicate only physically, but he has refined his command of this mode of expression to the degree that he is the finest thief in Harlem. Adele, nicely played by JoAnne Jones, resents the matriarchal structure she has inherited, but when it is supplanted by Theo's success she loses her sense of identity and becomes "just another piece of ass." Theopolis, whose name is Greek for city of God, is a complex and engaging character as he struggles to find a way to survive and retain his pride. He is beautifully played by Yardley Von, a young actor who combines intelligence and sensitivity with the fluid body expressiveness of a mime.

The central figure in the play is Russel, vaudeville dancer whose legs went bad too soon, living on the lies he makes up about the past, rising out of the present on the wings of ceremonies he goes through, from checker games he constantly loses to the abhorative affair with the young whore. He is too old to believe in Theo's plan, but he grasps at the last bit of living that it offers him. Melvin M. Bruce plays him well, but I would have preferred that all the emphasis was not laid on the comic aspects of his personality. This may be just carping though, for it was an effective performance.

JohnB. Wentworth's direction is adequate and Paul Taylor's set is a fine utilization of what must be one of the worst natural playing areas in existence.

The play may be set in Harlem, but the characters are not polemic cartoons, they are always human, and in their suffering they offer something to all men. Go and see the show. It is a shame to see something this good and realize that the audience is only half full, and it is a disgrace that Washington won't support good theatre any better than this.

- John Reap

LOVERS - By BRIAN FRIEL
at the Theatre Lobby

BRIAN FRIEL'S LOVERS is a real disappointment. The evening is made up of two one-act plays, Winners and Losers, and their titles are the most interesting part of the show, suggesting Friel's bleak vision of the possibilities of love. The plays themselves are failures, due largely to Friel's preference for the narrative art rather than the dramatic. Winners is the story of two youngsters who happen to drown a week before their shotgun wedding. We're told about the youngsters by two readers who are interrupted by a scene of the fateful couple as they discuss such cliches as the boy's sacrifice of his future. It all seemed trite and familiar and boring. I, for one was finally glad to see them go off to die. Losers is a better play, a play about how a

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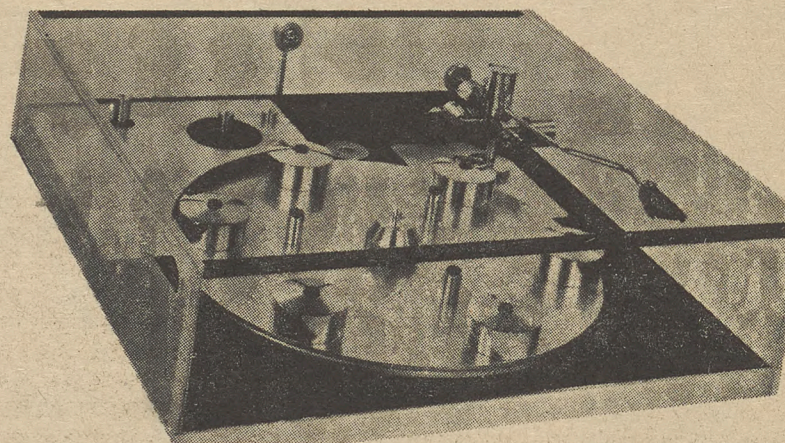
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man becomes dominated by his mother-in-law. This little piece is amusing, but again Friel has one character telling us a story that is interrupted by scenes that are acted out.

Theatre Lobby has given Lovers a better production than it deserves. The acting is uniformly good and the staging serviceable. I just had the feeling that there was more interesting stuff on television.

- J. R.

* * * *

MOONCHILDREN - By MICHAEL WELLER
at Arena Stage

IF YOU'RE UNDER 25, your parents should find Moonchildren a fine experience. The production is impeccable, generally first-rate performances keep it moving, and the script, though exceedingly whimsical and at times too cute, has an authentic tone and the language is the language of a houseful of college students from five years ago.

That's what the play is about, a houseful of college students five or six years ago, their trials, tribulations, loves and relationships. While it doesn't say much, it does create a very exact ambiance of the life period, and this play may last solely for its evocative powers when the students it tells about are nostalgically looking back on the good old anti-war sixties. Right now, however, I don't think it talks to those students, but to their parents, and it talks with such good humor and style that the parents are probably going to leave the play feeling they understand students a little better. I'm not sure they will, but they may think so.

Weller skillfully avoids over-sentimentalization most of the action, it would be hard to be moved by this play, for the characters under-cut the real emotion with humor, jokes and their own reticence. The plot of the play is dis-organized and only marginally important, and very hard to summarize. The character Norman progresses from math student to revolutionary in two or three short books, and plans an act of protest, very-like the act of protest in the Kreeger's forthcoming play by Günter Grass, *Uptight* (Davor in the German), which concerns a planned immolation. In *Moonchildren*, it's as important, or as unimportant, as everything else.

Three other characters, two men and a woman, are involved in a triangle which doesn't mean any more or less than anything else that happens. The play's original title, *Cancer*, has a meaning, and a moment of melodramatic action arises when the word, and, and the disease, are introduced into the play, and just maybe the word cancer has meanings beyond the disease, as a representation of the *Weltschmerz* that permeates the laughter of the play; maybe not.

Alan Schneider's direction is very skillful, and he has populated the play with a number of superior performers. Many of the performers are new to Arena: Christopher Guest, Maureen Anderman, Kevin Conway, Edward Herrmann and others, and I certainly hope this is not their last appearance there, but there are also a number of careful, successful minor roles filled by Arena veterans, most notably Robert Prosky as the landlord.

Weller's achievement should be a delight for that middle classed, middle-aged audience everyone seems to be writing for, and the only place he seems to be writing out of his depth, is in his women's roles. The women are not the effective broadened portraits that the men are, but really caricatures, modeled not so much on girl students, perhaps, as on their mothers. Indeed, one of the women says, "I sound just like my mother." And she does. Manipulative, matriarchal, these women are sexist portraits, not the women's lib forebears that college women of six years ago were.

- N. C.

* * * *

PANTAGLEIZE - By MICHEL de GHELDERODE
at the Kreeger Theatre

PANTAGLEIZE, A PLAY FORTUNATELY rescued from classrooms and obscurity, is a play dependent on the characterization of Pantagleize, a bumbling, to quote the promotion, "chaplinesque" innocent who triggers a May Day revolution with the phrase, "What a lovely day."

Portraying Pantagleize at the Kreeger is Richard Bauer, a six year veteran of the Arena theatres who has developed a small coterie of admirers, myself not included.

Jerzy Grotowski speaks of publictropyism in actors, a tendency in some actors to bend toward the light of their audiences, fulfilling expectations and basking in the glow of a warmth that those actors receive for leaving their audiences secure. Those actors are victims of their audiences, serving themselves up in various posturings as prostitutes are paid to service various lusts.

Bauer is not wholly guilty of this; he makes an effort at transforming himself, mostly facially, as he approaches a new role. But time and again he slips into loose-limbed rangy movements, posturings with one leg before the other and vocal patterns that have served his creation of every role I have seen him in, and that is many.

It is not that these posturings are bad, the rangy dis-jointed movements were fine for the rangy dis-connected drummer Shanty Mulligan in *No Place To Be Somebody*, and his vocal patterns were fine in *Wipe-Out Games* and *What the Butler Saw*, but after so many downward spiraling sentence endings and crossed standing ankles I can find little of the character emerging from the characterization; and just as little that Bauer is offering of his own inner self.

But what is this Pantagleize like? The character is a 40-year old writer for a women's paper who makes friends with a Negro shoeshine man who is a secret black revolutionary. He drinks with the black, with a poet revolutionary, with a waiter and a drunkard and utters his phrase on May Day, the day of a total eclipse. The revolution begins, his exults in the "proletariat manifesting its joy," and he falls in love with a militant woman. For an exquisite moment, stealing the crown jewels, he is clownishly heroic, then the whole revolution falls down around him like the decay of the animals' revolution in Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

The revolutionaries, with the exception of the intellectual waiter, fall into anti-democratic postures. The black militant cries, "I, nigger, will have the presidency!" The others scramble for power of their own.

It is an anti-revolutionary play, though the wisest character is a revolutionary; it is also an anti-government play. What it becomes is a pro-fool play, a play glorifying the "imbecile" Pantagleize, who unlike greater fools becomes caught in the passions of politics and is given a glimpse of power.

There is excitement and imagination in the staging of the fool's story. The set design by Santo Loquasto provides an excitement of its own, hiding dozens of intrigues in its sculpted levels. But Bauer does not provide us Pantagleize himself; he gives us a token representation of the fool as though he were chosen that evening to play the role in a well-known tribal ritual. It is as though Bauer has chosen not to involve us, but wants just to get the story told in ways which have always pleased us. Thus we get dependable laughs and no revelations.

It didn't please me, and I hold Bauer responsible for much of the displeasure, but the play seems to me somewhat dis-unified in either script or production, it's hard to say which, though there is much in the play to enjoy, and I would discourage no one from seeing it.

- N. C.

* * * *

ALL OVER - By EDWARD ALBEE
at the Washington Theatre Club

EUGENE MCCARTHY REPORTEDLY said to Edward Albee at a meeting last spring, when Albee loudly insisted on McCarthy telling his future political plans, that Albee had based his entire career on First Acts and that he, McCarthy, felt no need to reveal a second act to Albee who had never revealed a second act to his audiences.

What truth there is in that statement does not serve to explain *All Over* which doesn't even offer much of a first act. But there are flashes and exchanges of dialogue that reveal the talent Albee first presented in his early exciting one act plays.

The pity of it all is that the Theatre Club, which has been justly commended for its intentions in giving second chances to less than successful Broadway plays, like *All Over*, could have given a second chance to a much superior set of Albee Broadway failures with a production of *Box-Mao-Box*, from two seasons ago.

Albee's challenging experiments in *Box-Mao-Box* are reflected in this newer work, but palely and to little effect. The exteriorized internal monologues are naturalistic in *All Over*, and even with director Davey Marlin-Jones's efforts to direct the actors away from each other, rarely letting the connect for a word, the naturalistic format suffocates Albee's content. Whatever it is that was meant to be revealed to us by the dreamings and bickerings of this group of people gathered to await the death of a great man is lost.

Albee commendably avoids the obvious tensions that might result from putting a man's mistress and wife together to await the death of their common love, but familiar Albee parent-children conflicts arise and nothing surprising happens. The stilted Albee language has become predictable in this latest drama of semantic equivocation, and the actors have been unable, for the most part, to deal with it. They sound as if they're quoting someone from another century.

What is important, after all, if someone says, "I remember... not a smell, but a scent?" With plentiful such speeches, Albee makes the choice of the descriptive word more important than what the word describes, but that's all he does with it. In literary playwriting (as opposed to performance playwriting like the Living Theatre practices), the choice of the word has always been the key to the play's success. In naturalistic theatre, only Albee has tried to make dramas from the process of choosing the words. Several absurdist and Peter Handke have used the process of language to create intriguing experimental works, but the forms were adapted to the intent; if Albee would quit compromising for his audiences he might find an audience.

And McCarthy may have had it when he accused Albee of writing only first acts. The two one acts of *Box-Mao-Box* make a better single play than the two acts of *All Over*, which together don't comprise a first act.

-N. C.

* * * *

BRUCE By GERRY CARROLL
at American University's Clendenen Theatre

FOLLOWING THE DICTATES of his own vision, Gerry Carroll won the first annual Audrey Wood Award in playwriting for Bruce, a play uninfluenced by the laboratory ensemble approach currently popular among students and showing few traces of the experimental or Absurd traditions of recent years. As his models, Carroll instead chose, and too faithfully followed, examples set by Anouilh in *Becket* and Robert Bol in *A Man for All Seasons*.

The story of Robert Bruce, the Scottish chieftain who opposed Kings Edward I and Edward II for domination of Scotland, is stageworthy, but Carroll has succeeded far too rarely in lighting up the history with dramatic action. Where there should be action there are speeches, or dramatic chicanery like the pulling forth of a severed head, and even the character of Bruce is confined mostly to declamations. Admittedly, Reynolds Doyle's portrayal of Bruce does little to relieve the stiffness of the script and most of his lines are delivered straight to the audience while he clenches his hands into fists and thrusts them straight down his thighs in a mistaken effort to express dignity and strength.

Carroll's dependence on Bolt and Anouilh was a two-pronged failure, for his script lacked the bawdy vivacity of Anouilh, and the dignity of Bolt. Bolt's "Common Man" is resurrected in Bruce as a "Peasant Woman" who narrates the missing segments of history, sometimes entertainingly, always superfluously. It is a shorthand device of story-telling that largely accounts for the missing action; had the Peasant Woman been missing, the story would have had to carry itself, and quite possibly could have, but we have no way of knowing through what was presented. Personally, I believe the deadness of the form killed the play and if Carroll intends to continue writing plays, I hope he finds a form that can relate to his audiences and ceases to aspire to the ghost of Broadway success.

Of the players, only Barry Genderson as Edward II seemed to me in good control of his talents and he was unfortunately mis-directed in a campy, faggoty petulant interpretation of his role. A study of Brecht's and Marlowe's *Edward II* might have provided the depth needed for representation of the homosexual king; in fact, the whole evening would have been better spent in an inadequate revival of either of those plays.

Lynn Edson as the Peasant Woman was charming and confident, but nothing in the role allowed her to shine as an actress.

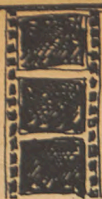
Boris Baranovic provided a nicely flexible set; spare, clean and attractive. It largely overcame the inadequacy of the gymnasium auditorium and brought such action as was presented into good focus. My apologies to the cast for missing the first five minutes of the performance.

- N. C.

* * * *

The Second Annual Audrey Wood Award in Playwriting, of which Bruce was the first winner, offers \$500 and a production at American University. This year's deadline is December 1, 1971, so if you have a script of any length to submit, it ought to be in the mail to Kenneth Baker, Director of Theatre at A. U., now. I hope this year's winner doesn't prove hobbled by the past and offers inventive original work.

* * * *



At the Movies

-The Washington Reviewing Society-Mark Power

The French Connection (R), 20th Century Fox, directed by William Friedkin, produced by Phillip D'Antoni, scripted by Ernest Tidyman, (based on the book, "The French Connection" by Robin Moore) starring Gene Hackman and Roy Scheider.

The French Connection belongs to that venerable genre, the cops & robbers movie, but it easily supersedes the limitations of the genre. Quite simply, it is a great film and most probably will be regarded as a classic. It succeeds on many levels: as art, as entertainment, as documentary, and as an acting vehicle for a consummate performance by Gene Hackman who deserves the Oscar for his role as Detective Egan.

Ostensibly, the movie is concerned with the efforts of two New York Narcs as they pursue various American and French drug smugglers attempting to bring several million dollars worth of pure heroin into the country.

Actually, in the words of Director William Friedkin (The Boys in the Band; The Night They Raided Minsky's) it is about "The thin line that sometimes does not separate the world of the cop and the criminal." In other words, the film is a documentary, cast in the role of a Graham Greene 'Entertainment'. It is about what it means to be a cop in New York City during the latter half of the 20th Century, and as a vehicle, it uses a true-life situation involving dope smuggling. It is not a literal documentary in the sense that all the 'facts' are true, but rather a documentary which respects truth and ignores facts, if they get in the way. It is a documentary which incorporates that apparently contradictory device, dramatic license. If Norman Mailer and Tom Wolfe are writing documentaries as if they are fiction, William Friedkin is directing a documentary as if it is entertainment.

The film tells us in graphic detail and one feels, with absolute authenticity, what it is like being a policeman in New York. It is about cops and their everyday world of casual violence. It is a world where cop and criminal act out their seemingly predetermined roles, oblivious to the rest of society, roles which seem to have nothing to do with justice, or crime either, for that matter. Perhaps the most significant aspect of these roles is that they are apparently interchangeable. When we first encounter Detective Egan (disguised as Santa Claus!) and his partner roughing up a pusher, we have no idea, at first, who is hunter, and who is hunting, the point being that the cop frequently uses criminal means to chase down the criminals. This is a point that is made over and over, in many subtle ways during the course of this documentary-as-thriller. If the violence is there, so too is the ordinariness: The tedium of a stakeout, the drabness of a cop's apartment in Brooklyn, the anonymity of the station house.

Connection is also a documentary about the working of Franco-American heroin connections, and in this respect, contains some footage shot in Marseilles. But the film really comes to life when it moves to New York, and perhaps unintentionally, it is also a documentary about that city. It captures the moneyed expense-account flavor of midtown Manhattan and contrasts it with the streets of Brooklyn and the black bars of Bedford-Stuyvesant. If future historians want a sense of what New York was like at this point in time, this film should be their source. It may not give them all the facts, but the flavor's there.

The Friedkin directorial style is marked by an apparent absence of style, that is, it is Friedkin's professed intention "not to get in the way of the story" and to avoid "auterism." He has succeeded in both accounts. The story line moves throughout the film unimpeded by directorial quirks and sustained by fluid photography, an unobtrusive score and superb acting, all enclosed in a shell of absolute authenticity and professionalism.

In fact, this consummate professionalism might be said to be one half of the Friedkin style. It is the kind of professionalism long associated with Hollywood in which the involved mechanics of film-making seem effortless. Friedkin differs from the usual Hollywood director in that he gives this professionalism substance, a substance that might be defined as a rigorously honest authenticity, the other half of his style. Hollywood's 'entertainments' are usually slick, overly-professional efforts of no credibility in either feeling or fact; the documentary film, on the other hand, usually achieves its authenticity at the expense of professionalism; in fact, grainy, harshly-lit jerky footage has become synonymous with truth. Friedkin's style lies in a synthesis of the merits of both these approaches; he has married the professionalism of the slick product to the honesty of the documentary. The end result is the documentary-as-entertainment which follows the logic of its intent, rather than the literalness of a story line, in its dual role as documentary and action film.

What about Friedkin's methodology? How does he give his professionalism the substance of truth? By carefully respecting the honesty of each scene and situation. Natural light was used throughout the film, except for one or two bar scenes. All filming was done on location, interiors and exteriors. Whenever possible, he uses real-life people in parts, instead of actors. Thus the real Detective Egan plays the role of a police superintendent in the film. He eschews camera tricks, such as 'undercranking', a device used to simulate speed. He respects the natural rhythm of a scene, and paces his cuts accordingly. Every scene has a 'technical advisor' (in this film, usually a cop) to insure authenticity. These techniques are not unique; many another director has used them. It is Friedkin's talent to combine them with an absolute degree of Hollywood professionalism so that Connection functions simultaneously as documentary and entertainment; it stimulates the adrenal glands and massages the mind at the same time.

There are a number of set-pieces in the film worth commenting on: A scene which contrasts an expensive meal being eaten by a criminal with the tepid coffee and cold pizza being eaten by Egan on the street. An assassination attempt on Egan's life which raises uncomfortable echoes of the tower in Texas, and the Manson murders among others, and an incredible chase, set in motion by the assassination attempt. Tediously composed shot-by-shot and carefully edited, it nevertheless flows into one long visual poem of beauty and violence. Inspired by the chase scene in "Bullitt", it is a memorable piece of film-making, which leaves one literally shaking at its conclusion.

The film is also the vehicle for an overwhelming performance by Gene Hackman. Wearing a porkpie hat and a police revolver strapped to his ankle, Hackman creates a Detective Egan that the real-life Egan described admiringly as "more real than me." He is a tough cop, not because he can push in the face of a drug-seller, but because it is so obviously routine to him. Not only tough, but he is also obsessed, demon-driven to get his man, a man who in the end, seems more illusion than flesh.

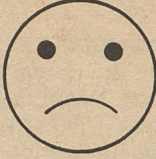
Since it is a critic's nature to be picky, I will mention that there are a few loose ends to the film that don't get tied up. We are given a glimpse of the French pusher's private life, and then no more - enough to tease, but not enough to set character. The ending seems unnecessarily metaphysical and does have a tinge of 'auterism'. Director Friedkin described an alternate ending which came to him while taking a shower after the film was completed which sounded better: Detective Egan and his partner in the middle of the East river on a barge (which raises memories of another film?) while they stare dumbfounded at trashmen on the shore pouring into the water two million dollars worth of heroin.

Some random observations: Connection opened recently at Annandale, Aspen Hill 2, Baronet, Republic, Riverdale Plaza, Silver, and Tyson's Corner theatres. Why not a first-run theatre is a mystery. It was filmed entirely on location in Marseilles and New York, took 65 days to make, and cost approximately 2 million dollars. The executive producer, G. David Schine, and the director have never met. Apparently Schine, during lunch in a New York restaurant with the author of the book, Robin Moore, scrawled his name on a napkin and became Executive Producer. To Friedkin's knowledge, he never once appeared on the set. "I'm told he's a very nice man, though," said Friedkin. Mysterious, indeed, the workings of Hollywood. Two scripts were discarded before a suitable one was found. Producer is Phillip D'Antoni who also produced 'Bullitt' and who may direct another film about Detective Egan and his partner, Detective Russo. The music is by Don Ellis - his first film score - and it works - that is you hardly notice it. Director Friedkin uses natural sounds to a great degree; not quite the contrapuntal conversational technique of 'M. A. S. H.', but getting there. Influences? By Friedkin's own testimony, other masters of the genre, Howard Hawks and John Ford. Evident in the film, maybe a very faint trace of Costas-Gravas.

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13 FOOD

Washington Reviewing Society: Food Division

DeVitos Pizza—Corner of 10th and H St., N. W.

Finding good food at decent prices in Washington has always been a problem. Finding a good pizza at any price has been impossible, until now. The Washington Reviewing Society is proud to present its latest find, destined to take its place right at the top of our ever growing list of fine, but little known, eateries in the Washington area. DeVitos pizza: Standing proudly on the corner of 10th and H Streets, its white walls exterior blazes forth like a beacon in the night directing you into the aging but expansive arms of its pleasant waitresses. Once inside you're immediately hurled backwards through time to an era when pizzas were hand crafted by skilled artisans. Men who imbued each pie with the subtle distinctions of his own time honored recipe. This, then, is DeVitos. Once inside and nestled in one of their well worn booths, we recommend a pre-pizza beer and a few moments of quiet listening to their fine juke box which features the hits of the forties played by your favorite big bands and as a concession to more modern times the melodious Tony Bennet singing "Arrivaderci Roma." And now, on to the Pizza. The menu proclaims that DeVitos was the first to bring pizza to Washington, that they use only the finest peeled tomatoes brought directly from Naples, and a crust of their own design made from an ancient Italian recipe. And here is where the brilliance of their pie reposes: In the crust. Unlike any other I've had; the crust is soft and crisp at the same time, slightly sweet, seemingly composed primarily of eggs. It provides a perfect foundation for the tasty cheese and tomatoe sauce that tops it all off. Each pizza at DeVitos is different from any other. Somehow, each is distinctive in some subtle way. Sometimes a fragrant sausage taste is present, sometimes oregano or garlic predominate. Its always a surprise. The prices are as good as the pizza. We suggest a medium sized pie for each adult. This pie rings in at \$1.35 for a plain. We also suggest that in the interest of economy and taste you don't junk up with pepperoni, anchovies and mushrooms, thus obscuring its own delicate taste and running up the price. DeVitos Pizza can stand on its own and should be judged that way.

Because the pizza is so good we've never gotten around to ordering anything else on the menu. All the prices are extremely inexpensive and if we can judge by the pizza, we would think that the other offerings must be equally as good. So if you're tired of standing in line at Luigis and want a truly great pizza, try DeVitos.

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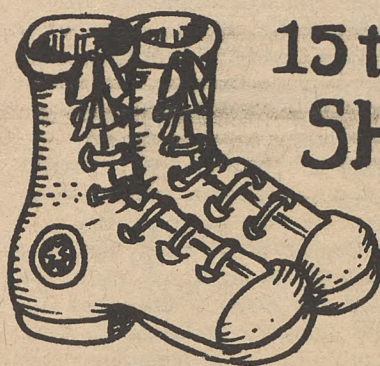
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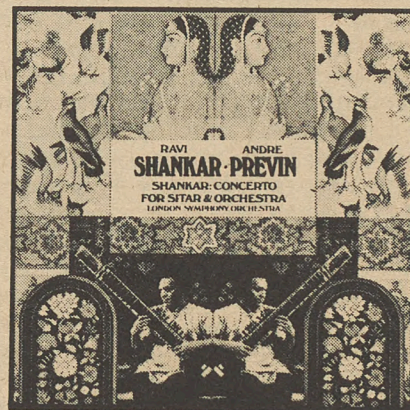
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LOST IN THE OZONE-Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen-Paramount PAS 6017

It's finally out! The legend is now on record for everyone to hear. Unless you saw them in San Francisco or Detroit, or were one of the lucky ones to catch them at Emergency last Spring, you've just heard a lot of raving, but no actual sounds. But now this record is in the record stores and you can get it and find out about the Ozone legend for yourself.

Now, this is mainly a studio recording so the live magic of the band doesn't come across. But still, this is an amazing record. The Commander and the boys sound like the house band at some redneck roadhouse and you can almost hear guys pukin' on the floor and glasses shattering. Commander Cody is anybody's band; a freaks' band, a truckdriver's band, a redneck's band, a band that you can take home to your parents... Play it for 'em, they'll dig it. Especially tunes like "Beat Me Daddy Eight To The Bar". It'll remind them of their childhood. Really, this album's got something for everyone. There's a lot of great country songs, old rock'n'roll like Buddy Holly's "Midnight Shift", a racing song, "Hot Rod Lincoln", a boogie-woogie, "Beat Me Daddy Eight To The Bar", and the Commander's theme song, "Lost In The Ozone"; "One drink of wine/two drinks of gin/and I'm lost in the Ozone again".

The band itself is one of the biggest collections of freaks imaginable. The Commander sits behind the piano with a stogie dangling from his lips, every once in a while getting up to sing, more or less, as in "Hot Rod Lincoln", "My Pappy told said son you're gonna drive me to drinkin'/if you don't stop drivin' that Hot Rod Lincoln". He also does a bang-up job on "Riot In Cell Block No. 9", which unfortunately isn't on this album. Then of course, there's Andy Stein on fiddle standing in the background wearing a long raincoat, buttoned right up to the neck. I think he probably sleeps in that raincoat. Andy also comprises 1/3 of "The Ozone Brass", along with lead guitarist Bill Kirchan and lead singer Billy C. Farlow. Stein plays sax on Eddie Cochran's "20 Flight Rock", an incredibly driving song which you could to the Twist to (remember that?). Kirchan has a trombone solo in "Beat Me Daddy...". Farlow doesn't play horns on the album but he plays trumpet live. Billy C. is amazing. On stage, he is a cross between Elvis Presley and Buddy Holly. He moves like Elvis and sings like Holly. He's from the Deep South-Decatur, Ala. to be exact, and he's got some roots. Studies to be a preacher. And you haven't heard anything until you've heard Billy C. sing "Be-Bop-A-Lula" or "Milk Cow Blues". They're not on the album, though. What is on the album is beautiful country stuff like "Daddy's Gonna Treat You Right" and "What's The Matter Now". And his singing on "20 Flight Rock" and "Midnight Shift" is just too much. He was just born to be a Star.

The country stuff on Side One is really strange. It's of the "tear-jerker" variety that you'd expect Tammy Wynette to be singing, but they are songs like "Wine Do Yer Stuff" and "Seeds And Stems (Again)" with Kirchan singing in his best moaning, about-to-break-down-into-tears country style about how he's "down to seeds and stems again, too". And Billy C. tells about how he's "gonna hi-jack one of them big jet planes and go back to Tennessee". Kirchan sings lead on "Home In My Hand" which sounds like Merle Haggard trying his hand at a rock song.

I just can't say enough about Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen. I'm sure they'll be going on tour soon to promote this album, and if they come this way, and you like to have a good time, go see them. But while you're waiting, pick up this album; it'll give you a lot of good times.

DETROIT WITH MITCH RYDER-Paramount PAS 6010

Detroit is the home of high-energy, high powered, killer rock and roll, as we've been told hundreds of times in the past three years by the likes of the Stooges, MC5, Brownsville Station, Catfish, The Amboy Dukes, and countless others. So, it takes balls for any one group to go out and name themselves 'Detroit', right? Well, Mitch Ryder and his gang have done just that, and I'm happy to say that their music is definitely high-energy, high powered... Some of the wildest, raunchiest rock that's gone done in a while. And it's only fitting that Mitch should be the one to lead the band. After all, in the mid-sixties, he was the white rock'n'roller, with all those great songs like "Little Latin Lupe Lu", "Jenny Take A Ride", "Devil With The Blue Dress", and so many others. It's been a long time between hits for Mitch, he's had a lot of problems. Finally, he's come up with a worthwhile band to work with, which includes the original drummer of The Detroit Wheels, John (The Bee) Badanjek, and organist Harry Phillips and bassist Ron Cooke, formerly of Catfish. And some maniac called Dirty Ed on congas. They look more like a street gang but they sure can play rock'n'roll.

The high point of this album comes with the first song on Side one, "Rock and Roll". Now, when I first looked at the album cover and saw the title, I thought to myself, "Oh no, the 86th song this year with that title, it must be one of those rock revival bits that everyone is doing". Then, when I took the album out of the jacket and saw that the song was credited to Lou Reed, I almost flipped out. Reed and the Velvet Underground did that song on their first LP, Loaded, one of the best songs on one of the best albums I've ever heard. But I couldn't imagine Mitch Ryder doing that song. The Velvets did it in a kind of laid-back, easy rocking manner, as Lou sang about a bored, confused girl who didn't get it on until she heard "that New York station". When the needle reached that cut on the Detroit album, I was greeted with a blazing guitar riff, extremely heavy rock, and a screaming vocal by Mitch, but to my amazement it works. After all, Reed was singing about a New York station and Ryder was singing about "a Detroit station" and there is the difference. The song is a classic, and Mitch's version is quite valid and can stand on its own. To be accurate, though, there is a song called "Let It Rock", which is the 86th version of an old rock and roll medley and it's pretty boring, but it's the only weak cut on the album. There's one especially fine tune called "Is It You (Or Is It Me), sung by Johnny Bee, who gets my vote for the "strangest voice of 1971 award". This cat sings entirely from his chest. Detroit also does a beautiful version of "It Ain't Easy", which segues into "Rock and Roll". Mitch can also sing ballad material well, as in "Drink" and "I Found A Love".

It's good to see that Mitch is back again, singing as good as before. If unpretentious hard rock appeals to you, get a hold of this album. Oh by the way, it's got a great cover too.

THE MORNING AFTER-J. Geils Band-Atlantic SD 8297

The first J. Geils Band album didn't sell well. A lot of people have never heard of them. There wasn't much promotional push behind that album, and the group didn't go out on a full scale tour to show people who they were. But now Atlantic seems to be fully behind the band and they will inevitably become big stars. In the course of picking up on the J. Geils Band, I hope that newcomers will get their first album, mainly because it was the best white blues/R&B album since the debut efforts of the Rolling Stones and the Butterfield Blues Band. It is also a better album than The Morning After. But this new one is also quite good, just slightly less powerful. They have left out the blues on this one, and get down to some fine hard rock and reworking of older R&B material. The band is as perfectly tight as on the first album, and J. Geils is just too much on guitar. But Geils isn't all there as to his band, Seth Justman's dancing organ is featured prominently, Peter Wolf gives us some unearthly vocals. And Magic Dick is, I swear, one of the best harp players around; as far as harp players go, take your choice between him or Paul Butterfield as to who's the best. "Wham - mer Jammer" is a two and a half minute instrumental featuring mainly his harp, and although it gets a little drawn out, it is still one that will keep you moving. The material on the new album is not as strong as the stuff on the first LP, but the songs are good vehicles for showing off their talents. Wolf is a great singer, but the lyrics he has to work with are ordinary, dull, and utterly forgettable. The music is something else, though. Nobody can play this stuff like the J. Geils Band. The album's opener, "I Don't Need You No More" has Geils playing some of the meanest, most piercing guitar you've ever heard, and great coordination between drummer Stephen Bladd and Justman. Don Covay's great ballad "The Unusual Place" is opened by an organ riff from Justman which will absolutely knock you out of your chair, your bed, or wherever you happen to be at the time. They also do an original ballad, "Cry One More Time", which is pretty good but it wouldn't have made it on their first album. They get into some great bouncing rock on "Floyd's Hotel" and "Looking For A Love". And they're at their funkier with the longest (but not too long) cuts, "Gotta Have Your Love" and "It Ain't What You Do (it's how you do it)". If you're like me, when you heard an incredible first album you just wished you could have been in Boston digging them all those years, and you'll get off on The Morning After. I have a feeling that their gig at American University last Spring was deceiving; they played great and all, and they sure know how to move around on stage, but the arrangements pretty much stuck to those on the album, and they ended every song exactly the same. But then again they were playing in that famous sound trap of the DC area, Leonard Gym. These may not be the days when a handful of dimes and a jukebox will cure your ills, but laying down four bucks for a J. Geils album can do quite a bit for you.

RUDY THE FIFTH-Rick Nelson-Decca DL 75297

Rick Nelson's got a problem. You see, people still keep confusing him with Ricky Nelson. They can't seem to forget the days of "Teenage Idol" and the Ozzie and Harriet Show. Well, that was over ten years ago and Rick is no longer Ricky and he's grown up a lot and his music has matured. He spent a lot of time as an unknown doing country music until he had a hit single a couple of years ago. And although he was relatively successful doing country rock during the last two years, he seems to be moving back into rock. He has a good band behind him, The Stone Canyon Band, and they can play well at either rock or country. Especially impressive in the band is pedal steel player Tom Brumley, who held the same position in Buck Owens' band. Randy Meisner, the bassist, was one of the original members of Poco. (I believe Randy has left the band now to join a country rock group with ex-Flying Burrito Brother Bernie Leadon) Rick is a fairly good songwriter, but his chief limitations are his voice and his versions of other people's material. There is nothing all that wrong with his voice, it's just that it's difficult for him to express emotion; he has to strain for any effect. His vocals are pleasant but most unspectacular. As for the material, he chooses a couple of Dylan songs here which he adds just a little to, "Just Like A Woman" and "Love Minus Zero/No Limit". We just don't need one more version. Rick also tries "Honky Tonk Woman". Don't laugh. It comes off okay, mainly due to Allen Kemp's fine lead guitar work. Nelson is no Mick Jagger, however. His vocal is not as gutsy as this type of song demands. It is a lot of fun, though.

Rick and the band do a good cover of a '50's rock song, "Feel So Good", which might be a good single. Now let's go to the original material, which is the best stuff on the album. Everyone is at their best in a hard driver called "Gypsy Pilot", which ends the LP. Kemp's guitar is right on target. Rick also gives a fairly adequate treatment to over-popular themes in "This Train" and "Thank You Lord". He is a lot better with the sad but not bitter "The Last Time Around" and the easy pleasant "Life". Rudy The Fifth is a likeable album. Rick Nelson isn't the king of rock and roll, he'll never tell you he is. But he writes good songs and he's got a good band and "Gypsy Pilot" is sheer dynamite so you just might want to get it.

BLESS THE WEATHER-John Martyn-Island SW 9311

John Martyn is a young Scottish singer/songwriter who recorded two beautiful and overlooked albums for Warner Brothers; Stormbringer!, and Road to Ruin; both recorded with his wife, Beverly. Everybody who has heard Stormbringer! loves it, and it was hailed in reviews as a classic. It is an especially beautiful album made during their first visit to Woodstock from England in the early summer of 1969, pre-festival. Road To Ruin was more jazz oriented, and it may be as good an album, but I don't have a copy of it so I wasn't able to do a solo album without Beverly and that's an album, but I don't have a copy of it so I wasn't able to get into it enough. When I heard that John was going to do a solo album without Beverly and that he would now be on Island Records in this country, I was hoping that he would come off as well without her, and that he would get the needed support from his record company. Now that the album is out, John shows he can do quite well on his own, although I still hope he records with Beverly again, but Capitol, Island's parent label, is totally ignoring the album, refusing to acknowledge its existence. What a tragedy. If this sells, it will be because of a fluke, or maybe through a review such as this or if some smart DJ's (there's got to be some out

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